

Failure to provide 9-1-1 capability on the PBX phone system poses a major liability to the school district.

The PBX location information provided to the 9-1-1 calltaker by the Local Exchange Carrier (telephone company) displays the location of the PBX central switchboard rather than the telephone from which the call is placed. In some instances, the PBX system is located at a school district office with extensions running to multiple schools miles away. The emergency 9-1-1 calltaker must be able to identify the physical location of a 9-1-1 call made from any telephone using the PBX system within each school facility.

This means that when an emergency call is placed to 9-1-1 from a phone in a school facility, the 9-1-1 calltaker sends emergency response to the PBX location rather than to the 9-1-1 caller. Or, if the communications center receives a display of the building address, they may find a three-story school building. The floor and room location are not provided and precious minutes are lost when attempting to find the 9-1-1 caller.

Washington State Governing Laws

Revised Code of Washington (RCW)
28A.335.320: A PBX system must be compatible with the county E911 system.

Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Chapter 118-68: Telephone systems must provide adequate location information through enhanced 9-1-1 systems pursuant to RCW38.52.505.

RCW 38.52.505: The chief of a local fire department or a chief fire protection officer designated by the city or county will be responsible for enforcing compliance.

WAC 118-68-060: The recommended fine for non-compliance is steep. It could result in a \$100 fine per day per telephone system.

For more information, contact:
Washington State Enhanced 9-1-1 Program
at 1.800.562.6108 or visit our web site at:
<http://emd.wa.gov/>



Washington Military Department
Emergency Management Division

Enhanced 9-1-1 Program
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HOW FAST CAN 9-1-1 GET EMERGENCY HELP TO YOUR SCHOOL?



Your PBX
may slow
response
time!

A Speedy Response Saves Lives

Does your school's Private Branch Exchange (PBX) phone system meet the requirements of state law? If you purchased your phone system in the past ten years, it might not.

RCW 28A.335.320 passed in 1995. This law requires any new PBX acquired by schools after January 1, 1997, to connect to the public switched telephone network (PSTN) and provide Enhanced 9-1-1 service (including location and callback information).

Many PBX phone systems installed after 1997 were funded through the Federal e-rate program. This program, established by an amendment to the Telecom Act of 1996, provided 20 to 90 percent discounts on telecommunications services, Internet access and internal connections to schools and libraries. The Federal e-rate program did not fund the 9-1-1 features or meet the intent of the state laws for 9-1-1 compliance.

What is Enhanced 9-1-1 Service?

Enhanced 9-1-1 (E911) service automatically provides the location and telephone number of a 9-1-1 caller to a calltaker at the communications center. This feature is invaluable when the caller is excited, confused or unable to offer complete information. If the location is given by the caller, the accuracy of that information is then verified in the database. Telephone company records are able to identify the physical location of the originating phone call, except for calls placed from a PBX system.

Save lives and protect property.



1. School district staff must be informed that emergency calls placed on a PBX phone system may not result in accurate emergency response. Therefore, it is necessary for the caller to be able to provide his or her location when placing a 9-1-1 call.
2. School administrators may consider dealing with PBX's lack of automatic location identification (ALI) capabilities by installing pay phones or single-line phones in areas accessible to persons using school facilities.
3. Comply with the state mandate while safeguarding the lives of students, faculty, staff and visitors. Consider developing a plan for each school and put it into practice.

What About A Plan?

Be sure you understand your current telephone system's capabilities by working with your local telephone company and your system supplier and by educating your staff and students.

Understand your PBX's limitations and plan for them. Your plan should be simple yet workable and to be successful should address the following:

1. Identify the location of each phone throughout the school campus.
2. Detail step-by-step what to do in an emergency. Each emergency warrants a different response.
3. Develop the plan with the support of the school district's telecommunications professionals.
4. Enlist help from the public safety community (police, fire, emergency medical and emergency management). It is vital that these emergency personnel are provided a copy of your plan so they become familiar with the location of all phones on the school campus.
5. Exercise the plan routinely.

